208 then either published or thrown out. Public information and propaganda are inseparable in Hungary.

The basic twofold aim of Communist propaganda in Hungary is (a) the reeducation of the masses on a Leninist basis and (b) the gradual Russification of the country. Perhaps the word Russification is too strong, but it certainly represents a distant undeniable goal. Today the Magyars have so far assimilated very little from Russian culture. The Party's (or government's) information activity toward the citizens is based on Lenin's own assumption that propaganda tries to drive home a set of ideas for individuals or a group while agitation has more limited content, carries only a few ideas, but carries them to all the people.

208 645 On June 8, 1949, the Propaganda Ministry was revived under the name of the Ministry of People's Culture. Its importance is clearly indicated by the fact that its first head was József Révai himself, one of the most influential Moscovites and the chief theoretician of the Hungarian Communist Party.

208 665 Within the Party organisation, the Propaganda Division of the Central Directorate is in charge of all information activities and is directly responsible to the Secretary General.

744 assumed that by now about one-fourth of the rural population has access to such health centers.

[645] Contemporary health regulation in Hungary is centralized within and directed by the Ministry of Health established in 1951. This agency reports in 1955 that during its four years it has increased the network of local health agencies by over 50 per cent; this is certainly an exaggeration. The evaluation of health data furnished by the Communist government is becomming increasingly difficult, since only percentages and indices have been published and never actual statistics.

165 In 1930 the percentage of infant mortality was 15.8 and, in 1938, 13.1 per cent. The death rate was as follows in the pre-war period:

Year	Deaths per mille
1925	19.9
1938	14.4
1941	14.1

In 1951 a mortality rate of 8.4 per cent was claimed. This is still
161 higher than the Western European average. Communist estimates also gave a natural population increase of 7.8 per 1000 in 1951 as compared to 5.7 in 1938. These figures seem to be acceptable.

1: Indiana U. E-4 1955 EC: Hungary EC:

Members of the Secretariat: Mátyas Rákosi, Mihály Farkas (ousted in 1955), Lajos Acs, Béla Vég, János Matolcsi.

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Chairman of the Central Committee of Control: Károly Kiss.

Below follows a short biography of each of the more important office-holders in June, 1955, in Hungary in alphabetical order, along with the biographies of persons recently eliminated from the political hierarchy but who are deemed to be important for their previous activities and, perhaps, for their future potentialities.

ÁCS, LAJOS. Member of the Central Committee, member of the Political Committee since 1953, member of the Secretariate of the Communist Party since 1955. In charge of organization, especially among the peasants. A party bureaucrat.

ALTAMÁR, IVÁN. Minister of the Food Industry. Information lacking.

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APRÓ, ANTAL. Minister of Building Materials, Deputy Prime-Minister. Former Chairman of the Hungarian Trade Union Association. Young and promising Communist.

BATA, ISTVÁN. Minister of Defence. Lieutenant General, and former Chief of Staff of the Hungarian Army; as such he actually ruled the Army in the name of Farkas Mihály, his predecessor. Bata was

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645 [701] before the war a career officer in the Russian Red Army of the USSR and a Russian citizen. Succeeded Farkas in 1953.

BEBRITS, LAJOS. Minister of Post and Transportation. "1. Was taken to Russia as prisoner in the first war and was trained there. He went over to the United States in the twenties, where he became chief editor of the "Hungarian Future", participated in the underground movements and organized the Hungarian Communist movement. When Sándor Magyar and György Endresz, pilots of the aircraft "Justice for Hungary", arrived to New York after their ocean flight - Lajos Bebrits lead a group of Hungarian Communists to the port to demonstrate against the pilots of "Justice for Hungary", so that he was arrested by the police and sentenced in Newark under the charge of rioting. He was actively engaged in pioneer activities among the Hungarians of Miami and founded a Hungarian club. After the termination of World War II Bebrics returned to Hungary. 2. Neither Moscow-trained Communist, nor Nazi. 3. Not a Soviet citizen. 4. Has a political black-book. 5. Educated journalist, speaks English, Russian and Hungarian."

665 [71] BENKE, VALERIA. Chairman of the Hungarian Office for Radio Broadcasts. One of the leaders of the post-war Communist womens' front organization, the MNDSZ, later General Secretary of the Peace Council.

In 1953 she was elected MP and elected also to the Central Committee of the Party. 665 647

BERES, ANDOR. Chairman of the National Office of Planning. Born in 1900. Economist. Formerly General Secretary of the same agency.

BOGNAR, JOZSEF. Minister of Interior Trade. Born in 1917. 645 ●
"1. Of middle-class origin, Roman-Catholic, professor with university degree. Member of the Smallholders' Party but in the services of the Communists. 2. Had Communist leanings. 3. Not a Soviet citizen. 4. Has no black-book. 5. Became Minister of Propaganda in 1946 and was involved in the so-called conspiracy. He was not arrested and taken to Stalin Street 60 only under the condition that he must work for the Communists as under-cover agent in the Smallholders' Party. Minister of Interior Trade since 1948." He was Mayor of Budapest in 1947.

BOLDOCZKY, JANOS. Minister of Foreign Affairs. Peasant background, formerly in the diplomatic service.

CSERGO, JANOS. Minister of Smelting and Machine Industry. Information lacking.

[illegible], [illegible]. Minister of Mining. "1. Participated in

645 the underground Communist movement before the war; joined the Social-Democrat Party in 1935 in order to cover himself. 2. Neither Nazi, nor Moscow-trained Communist. 3. Not a Soviet citizen. 4. Has no black-book. 5. Insignificant dummy, member of the Central Committee."

DARVAS, JÓZSEF. Minister of People's Culture. "1. Born in Orosháza in 1912, of Rumanian agrarian-proletarian descent, Christian, trained teacher, writer. His books and articles began to be published in the thirties; member of the National Peasant Party, was connected with the underground Communist Party prior [sic] to the war. 2. Neither a Moscow-trained Communist, nor Nazi. 3. Not a Soviet citizen. 4. Has a political black-book. 5. Marxist education, fellow-traveler, since 1945 obeys Communist orders in the National Peasant Party. Minister [of Construction and Public Works, then Minister] of People's Culture [propagandal."

DOBI, ISTVÁN. Chairman of the Presidium of the Hungarian People's Republic since 1953. Born in 1898. "1. Grammar-school education, Christian, farmland. Trained in Hungarian agrarian socialism. Member of the Smallholders' Party prior to and after World War II. 2. Neither Nazi, nor Moscow-trained Communist. 3. Not a Soviet citizen. 4. Has no black-book. 5. Has non-commissioned officer during the

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war. At that time he already had communist leanings and after the war the Communists staged his return to the Independent Smallholders' Party. He became Minister of Agriculture after the war and Prime-Minister in 1948. He is a dipsomaniac, an immoral and corrupt fellow-traveler, and abjectly serves the Communists."

ERDEI, FERENC. Minister of Justice since 1953. "1. Was born in 1912 [sic; actually 1910] in Makó, of peasant origin, Christian, university degree. Participated in radical youth movement in the thirties, wrote several books and studies on agrarian politics and colonization. Sentenced several times, was in contact with the underground Communist Party. Became Minister of Interior on December 23, 1944 under the Provisional Debrecen Government, organized the Communist Police. 2. Neither Moscow-trained Communist, nor Nazi. 3. Not a Soviet citizen. 4. Has a political black-book. 5. Participated in the creation of the National Peasant Party in 1939, but was a Communist under-cover agent in that party from 1944. Cultured, intrepid, crypto-Communist, speaks English, German and Hungarian. His wife, Jolán Majlát, secretary-general of the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations, has a strong influence over him. Became Minister of Agriculture in 1948."

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ERDEY-GRÚZ, TIBOR. Minister of Higher Education. Born in 1902. Former university professor, a chemist, and a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

FARKAS, MIHÁLY. Born in 1904. Of proletarian origin, a Jew, grammar-school education, one-time printer. Participated in the underground Czechoslovak movement beginning from the thirties, and later became one of its leaders. Went to Moscow prior to the war, joined there the group of Hungarian exiles and returned to Hungary in their company. Moscow-trained, a Soviet citizen; has a political blackbook. Well indoctrinated Communist, good organizer, speaks Hungarian, Russian, Czechoslovak and German. State Secretary of Interior in 1945, Minister of Defence from 1948 until 1953 when he started to lose political ground. Entangled in Nagy's Malenkovistic experiments, he was ousted recently (1955) from the Political Committee and Secretariat of the Party.

GERŐ, ERNŐ. Deputy Prime Minister. "1. Previous name Ernő Singer, born in 1900 [sic; actually 1898], Jew. Wanted to enter the medical profession, but interrupted his studies in 1919 at the period of the proletarian dictatorship and joined the Communist movement. Later fled to Czechoslovakia, then settled down in Moscow and became an offi-

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cial of the foreign policy section of the Comintern. In 1936 the Moscow Government appointed him as adviser to Negrin, president of the Spanish Republic. After the termination of the civil war in Spain, he returned to Moscow where he worked in the Ministry of External Affairs and analyzed reports of POW's during the war. He returned to Hungary in 1945. 2. Moscow-trained Communist. 3. Soviet citizen. 4. Has a political black-book. 5. Cultured, well-educated Communist theoretician, speaks Hungarian, English, German, French, Spanish and Russian. After the war he became minister of transportation, minister of finance and is at present chairman of the People's Economic Council. [Minister of Interior in 1953. Deputy Prime Minister in 1954.] Member of the central and political committees and secretariat of the Communist Party."

HÁZI, ÁRPÁD. Chairman of the State Control Center. Formerly Deputy-Prime-Minister

HAY, LÁSZLÓ. Minister of Foreign Commerce. Information lacking.

HEGEDÜS, ANDRÁS. Prime-Minister. Hegedüs belongs to the young guard of Communists in Hungary and was the first among them to gain national importance. During and immediately before the war, he attended the Györfy College in Budapest and had leftist sympathies. After

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the war he joined the Communist Party. In 1946, he was sent to the USSR where he studied economics, agronomy and Russian, which he now speaks. Upon returning to Hungary, he worked as a Party bureaucrat. In 1951 he became Deputy Minister of Agriculture, in 1952 Minister of State Farms and Forests. Upon the erection of the Nagy cabinet, he became First Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the Ministry of Agriculture. In 1953 he quit his latter job on the ground that Nagy's agrarian policies were too liberal. On April 18, 1955, he took over the government.

HEGEDÜS, ISTVÁN. Minister of Heavy Industry. Former Party secretary of the Budapest district, deputy Prime Minister; potentially a very powerful young man in the present regime.

KISS, ÁRPÁD. Minister of Chemical Industries and Power Production. Until 1954, Kiss was Minister of Light Industry. An insignificant bureaucrat.

KOVÁCS, ISTVÁN. Deputy-Chairman of the Presidium. "1. Former name Jenő Rosznер, about 40 years of age [born 1911], Jew, high school education. He was very young when he joined, as employee, the underground Communist Party in the thirties. Was arrested in 1931 and sentenced by the Budapest Military Court to 11 years of imprisonment;

645 came to the end of his term in 1942, but due to the war, instead of being released, was sent to a concentration camp from where he was freed in 1945. 2. Neither Moscow-trained Communist, nor Nazi. 3. Not a Soviet citizen. 4. Has a political black-book. 5. Worked in 1945 in the organization section of the Communist Party. Became party secretary to the Central Committee in 1949, became member of the political committee in 1951 and appointed Deputy-Chairman of the Presidium. Home-trained, extremely cultured Communist, one of the most brilliant careers in the Communist Party. Rákosi's confident, speaks German, Hungarian and Russian."

467 [redacted], Károly. Chairman of the Hungarian Trade Union Association. Party bureaucrat of Jewish descent. Member of the Central Committee. Acceeded to his present post in 1953.

[redacted], József. Deputy-Prime-Minister. Former Chairman of the metal workers association and the Trade Union Association. Young rising Communist, he was appointed to the Political Committee in 1955.

693 [redacted], Imre. President of the Highest Court. Born in 1894. "1. Of middle class origin, Christian, has a lawyer's degree, was member of the Trotskij-wing illegal party; later broke away from the Communists, but was generally known as extreme leftist. Wrote several

In June, 1953, he took over the presidency of the Council of Ministers 643
and instituted the less tough policies of the "New Course" on the
Malenkov pattern. Ousted in 1955 as Prime Minister, he also lost
his former seat on the Political Committee of the Communist Party.
Speaks Hungarian, Russian and German.

OLT, KAROLY. Born in 1904. "1. Of middle-class origin, 645
Christian, professor with university degree. Member of the radical
Hungarian youth movement in the thirties. Joined the underground
Communist movement in later years [1930]. Was imprisoned several
times, was in Hungary during the war. 2. Neither Moscow-trained
Communist, nor Nazi. 3. Not a Soviet citizen. 4. Has a political
black-book. 4 [sic]. Home-educated Communist, but did not belong
to the Rajk-group, so that in the beginning he hardly played any role,
Intellectual, speaks Hungarian, German and French. Member of the
Central Committee. [1947-1949: Minister of Welfare.] Minister of
Finance since 1949.

PIROS, LASZLO. Minister of Interior. Born in 1917. Became
after World War II Deputy Secretary of the Trade Union Council, then
Major General and commander of the AVH, the Hungarian political police.
Elected Alternate Member of the Political Committee of the Party in

1955.

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POGÁCSÁS, GYÖRGY. Minister of State Farms. Information lacking.

RÁKOSI, MÁTYÁS. Deputy Prime Minister; First Secretary of the Hungarian Workers' Party. "1. Born in 1891 [sic; actually 1892] as Mátyás Róth, college education, Jew. White-collar worker before the war. Was taken prisoner by the Russians in World War I. Was indoctrinated in War Prison Camps; upon his return to Hungary, in 1919 he was raised to the rank of commissar, and was put in charge of socialist production. He went to reside in Moscow in the fall of 1919 after having fled from Hungary. He was sent by the Comintern to Italy, Belgium, Great-Britain and the USA under assumed names. Was sent back to Hungary by his Muscovite masters in 1925. He was arrested and sentenced first to eight years of imprisonment and then sentenced for life by the Supreme Court. In 1940 he was exchanged for Hungarian historic relics which were looted by the Russians and kept in the Kreml [sic]. He lived in Moscow from 1940 to 1944 and worked at the Hungarian Section of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. He returned to Hungary in 1945." Moscow-trained, Soviet citizen. "4. There was a warrant for his arrest in many countries under several of his assumed names on the charge of being a Communist agent.

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5. Highly educated, cultured, well-informed Communist, with a knowledge of Hungarian, English, German, French, Italian, Russian and Turkish...." Rákosi is the top man in Hungarian politics since 1945. Succeeded to this position in spite of numerous purges and changes of courses."

REVAI, JÓZSEF. Vice-Chairman of the Presidium. Born in 1898. "1. Of middle class origin, Jew, was graduated from high school. Was Béla Kun's secretary in 1919 and one of the editors of the "Red Gazette" Later on he lived in Germany and Czechoslovakia, then went to live in the Soviet Union where he worked for the Hungarian Section of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and supervised the Hungarian broadcasts of Radio-Moscow. In 1945 he returned to Hungary. 2. Moscow-trained Communist. 3. Soviet citizen. 4. He has a political black-book." Editor of Társadalmi Szemle, scientific monthly of the Party, he is "One of the most cultured Communist theoreticians, quick-witted, temperamental, aggressive, speaks German, French, Hungarian and Russian. ..." A member of the Central Committee of the Party, and Minister of Public Education from 1949 to 1953. Since then, he has been Vice President of the Presidium. His influence in the party has lessened in the last years.

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ROMAN, JOZSEF M.D., elected Minister of Health in January, 1955.

RÓNAI, SÁNDOR. Speaker of the National Assembly. Born in 1892. "1. Grammar-school education, Christian, gasman before the war and secretary of the Social-Democrat Party in Miskolc. 2. Neither Nazi, nor Moscow-trained Communist. 3. Not a Soviet citizen. 4. Has no black-book. 5. Minister of Food after the war, later Minister of Commerce. Played an important part in the merger of the Social-Democrat and the Communist Parties in 1948. After the ouster of Szakasits in 1950 he became Chairman of the Presidium as a reward for his services. He is uneducated, unintelligent yes-man, capable of anything. [Former] Member of the Political Committee." In 1955 he became Speaker of the National Assembly.

SZALAI, PÉTER. Minister of Light Industry. Formerly Chairman of the Office of the Plan, succeeded to the cabinet post in October, 1954, during the "New Course." Before the war he was generally known as a "Rightist" in student organizations, but this did not prevent him from rallying to the Communists after the war, where he was again active in youth organizations. Member of the National Assembly since 1949.

SZIJJÁRTÓ, LAJOS. Minister of Construction. Information lacking.

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SZOBEK, ANDRÁS. Minister of Crop Collection since 1954. Born in 1894. "1. Of agrarian-proletarian origin, Christian, carpenter with grammar-school education. Was quite young when he came into contact with agrarian Socialism in Hungary and became member of the underground Communist Party. Became county-sheriff in County Békés in 1945 and state-secretary in the Ministry of Food, later minister to Moscow [and Peking, then]...Minister of Foreign Trade. 2. Neither Soviet-trained Communist, nor Nazi. 3. Not a Soviet citizen. 4. Has a political black-book. 5. Uneducated, violent man, speaks Hungarian, Slovak and Russian, member of the Central Committee."

VÁS, ZOLTÁN. Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade. "1. Previously called Zoltán Weinberger. Born in 1900 [sic; 1903] from a "petit bourgeois" family, Jew, high-school education. Joined the Communists when very young[18]. When Rákosi came to Hungary in 1925 [sic; 1924] to organize the underground party, Vas became one of his most trusted collaborators. They were both arrested in the fall of 1925; Vas was sentenced for life, but went to the Soviet Union in 1940 with Rákosi. Served in the Red Army in the rank of colonel, selected the Hungarian POW's. Arrived to Szeged in the fall of 1944, where he became one of the organizers of the Independence Front. 2. Moscow-

645 trained Communist. 3. Soviet citizen. 4. Has a political black-book. 5. Has a flair for economy and commerce. Organized the distribution of food supplies in Budapest in 1945 as Government commissioner. He directed the economic life of Hungary in 1946 as secretary-general of the Chief Economic Council. His corruptedness was notorious; at one time when it seemed that he was dropped, he was suddenly summoned to Moscow where his position was strengthened, and he was appointed head of the Planning Bureau in 1948. He is a trained Marxist-[sic] Leninist-Stalinist, member of the political [Central] Committee, speaks Russian, German and Hungarian." Later destitute, he was made director of the Mining trust of Komló, and in 1954 Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade.

VÖRÖS, JÁNOS. Deputy Finance Minister and President of the National Bank. Information lacking.

SOURCE

000 Kovács, Imre
1951. Short Biographical Studies. New York: National Committee for a Free Europe. Pp. 14.

marked increase in prices since 1938. Reduced to the prewar territory and in 1938 pengoes, annual investments would have been of the order of 30-40 million pengoes, giving a total of 300-400 million pengoes.

The act did not provide special machinery to carry out the plan. An overhaul and reorganization of the agricultural administration was proposed, a measure which in any case was overdue, but the act did not go into details. One innovation, specifically mentioned, was the appointment of agricultural officers to all the larger villages and to groups of smaller ones to control the execution of decrees of an agricultural-technical character and to give advice on agricultural matters to the local councils and the farmers. Hitherto the organization of the agricultural administration was curiously deficient, as it had officers only in larger territorial units which were too large for efficient control.

The other innovation was the setting up of the National Council of Agriculture, an advisory body, appointed by the Minister of Agriculture. Otherwise, the role of the Chamber of Agriculture did not change and the special interest groups of farmers were to continue to exercise their functions.

The powers of the minister were greatly increased. The minister could compel producers of special lines to set up organizations to represent their interests. To regulate supply and improve distribution, the minister was also authorized to set up organizations combining producers, processers and distributors to regulate production and prices with binding force for all concerned; he was also authorized to give monopolistic rights to cooperative societies or state organizations for the purchase, distribution and export of specified agricultural products.

Increases in production were to be brought about by investments, by temporary tax rebates to farmers making permanent improvements, and by greatly increasing the power of the Minister of Agriculture to compel farmers to adopt more efficient methods.

Investments included increasing the number and improving

Transylvania was reincorporated—43,500 sq. km., population 2.6 million.

April 1941, the occupation of part of Voivodina added 11,500 sq. km., population 1.0 million.

In 1941, Hungary had a territory of 172,200 sq. km., with a population of 14.7 million, against 93,100 sq. km. and 9.3 million in the Trianon territory.

9: Eppstein S-4 (no date) 1945 EC1 Hungary EC1

467 668 country in the nineteenth century, the authorities were hostile to the idea of the workers organizing, and when they began to do so, tried to split the movement by setting up a 'national' centre, in which all the workers in State service, including the employees of the railways, had to belong. There were also Christian Trade Unions. But the Social Democrat Trade Union movement, akin to the British Labour movement, proved much the stronger, and although the Trade Unions were forbidden to engage in politics, they got round this by forming 'shadow' unions, to which each member of an official union belonged. Ever since the last war the Social Democrat Party has managed to win a few seats in Parliament. Like the Peasant leaders, the Social Democrat leaders stood up boldly during the present war for freedom and independence and openly opposed the Government's subservience to Germany. In 1943 and 1944, after they had concluded an alliance with the peasants' leaders, they were becoming a power in the land. In March 1944, the puppet government imprisoned them and placed the whole Labour movement under the 'national labour centre', afterwards introducing new single labour organization for the whole country. The workers' own leaders re-emerged to take a leading part in the Provisional Government established in the area controlled by the Red Army, in December 1944.[1]

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[1] In the Miklós Government, responsible to the elected Provincial National Assembly at Debreczen, Agoston Valentini, a branch Secretary of the Social Democrat Party, became Minister of Justice, Dr Takats, also a Social Democrat, Minister of Industry, and Dr Molnár, of the same party, Minister of Social Services.

9: Eppstein S-4 (no date) 1945 EC1 Hungary EC1

the capital was cleared of its defenders, what had been the pride of generations of Hungarians, was a mere smoking heap of ruins. Of all the capitals of the belligerents, on either side, not one, except only Warsaw, has suffered so dreadfully as Budapest.

THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT. But the last act of this tragedy was not altogether without hope. Even while Budapest was undergoing its death-agony, news came from Debreczen—the historic city of Eastern Hungary in which Kossuth had proclaimed the separation of Hungary from Austria in 1849—that a new Provisional National Assembly, elected by local Resistance Councils and the liberated towns and villages, had met and had appointed a Provisional Government. The most prominent figures in it were high serving officers, two of whom had crossed over to the Russians in obedience to the Regent's proclamation of 15 October 1944, while the third had headed the armistice delegation to which the proclamation referred. The other members of the Government were drawn chiefly from the democratic and pro-Allied parties, which under the recent regime had been working underground, preparing for such a day as this. There were Smallholders, Social Democrats, Communists and some progressive non-Party men, including the son of Paul Teleki, who had committed suicide in 1941 in the hope of saving his country.[1]

[1] The reported composition of the Government, which certainly seemed representative enough, was as follows: *Prime Minister*, Gen. Bela Miklós de Dálnok (a Transylvanian Szekler not hitherto known in politics); *Under-*

9: Eppstein S-4 (no date) 1945 EC1 Hungary EC1

The Government announced a programme of democratic and social reform, the restoration of the old liberties suppressed by the previous tyrannies, the repeal of anti-Jewish laws and the introduction of a radical land reform and of other urgent social measures.

At the same time, they accepted the consequences of defeat. War was declared on Germany. A new delegation went to Moscow and received from the Allies armistice terms which pledged Hungary to renunciation of whatever temporary gains of territory she had made at the expense of the United Nations, and to reparation for the losses which her policy had inflicted on them. A new army was to help Hungary to 'work her way home' by joining in the common fight against the remaining enemy.

CONCLUSION

The Provisional Hungarian Government promised to make a new start. It broke with Germany and with the policy of aggression. It promised to seek a peaceful and friendly relationship with the

Sec. of State, Rev. Istvan Balogh*; *Foreign Affairs*, János Gyöngyössy* (Smallholders' Party); *Interior*, Francis Erdei (National Peasants' Party); *Justice*, Agoston Valentini (Social Democrat); *Finance*, I. Vásaly (Smallholder); *War*, General János Vörös* (former Chief of Staff; commanded troops in Russia); *Supply*, Gen. Gabriel Faragó; *Industry*, Dr Takats (Social Democrat); *Trade*, Dr Joseph Gabór (Communist); *Social Services*, Dr Erik Molnár (Social Democrat); *Education*, Count Géza Teleki (Conservative); *Agriculture*, Imre Nagy (Communist).

* The three members of the second Armistice Delegation to Moscow.

14: Evans S-3 (1950) 1953 ECl Hungary ECl
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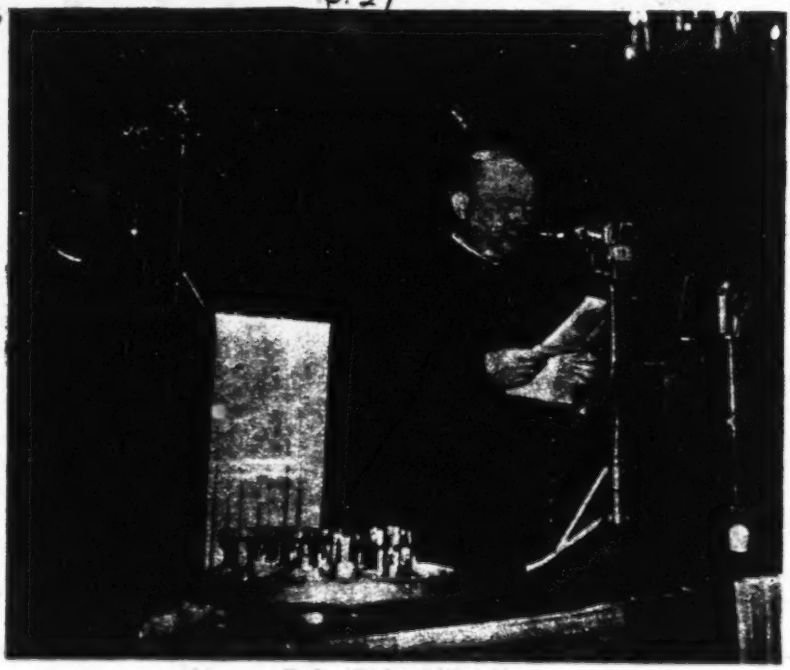

Father Richard Horváth.

794 208 575 Both Catholics and Protestants protested to the Security Council against the bombing of civilians in Korea. At the World Peace Congress there were substantial Catholic and Protestant delegations, the Catholic being led by Fr. Horváth and the Protestant by Bishop Péter of Debrecen and Bishop Dezséry of the Lutherans. At the same time the Protestants issued a peace appeal to the Christians of the world; in January 604 the Catholic paper *Uj Ember* (New People) expressed its approval of the Peace Law as did *A Kereszt* (The Cross)* the new weekly paper of the Catholic Priests' Peace Committee and the Lutheran Bishops issued a joint pastoral on Peace.

Recent Developments

657 645 Since that time there have been a number of developments of general interest.

In May, 1951, a new law was passed creating a State Office for Church Affairs charged with dealing with all relations between the Churches and the State. No new principle was involved in this measure because the Minister of Education had previously held the responsibility for dealing with such matters. The creation of the new department recognised that the churches were independent and ought not to be confused with questions such as education which were directly the province of the State, and at the same time, by creating a Minister responsible solely for relations between State and Church, it assured that these relations

* Other Catholic periodicals are the bulletin *Magyar-Kurir* (Hungarian Courier) and the monthly *Vigilea*.

14: Evans S-3 (1950) 1953 ECI Hungary ECI

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would receive the attention they deserved. The department has since brought the Catholic clergy into the National Insurance scheme and has also facilitated the creation of church co-operative stores for the sale of church literature, vestments and furnishings.

The next development was an unhappy one. The Archbishop of Kalocsa, Jozsef Grösz, who had succeeded Mindszenty in the leadership of the Catholic Church in Hungary, and eight others, were brought to trial, found guilty and sentenced, for continuing the Mindszenty conspiracy. Once again the evidence was overwhelming and the contention of those who had held that Mindszenty and his accomplices had only confessed what they knew the prosecution knew, was abundantly proved when it transpired that Grösz had been entrusted by Mindszenty with the task of continuing his subversive work in the event of his being arrested.

This trial of a second leader of the Catholic Church was obviously a profound shock to the Bench of Bishops and in July, under the presidency of Dr. Czapik, the Archbishop of Eger, they issued unanimously the following statement:

The Hungarian Bench of Bishops—following the principles of the Catholic faith, and obeying the commands of God, according to which we should be dutiful citizens and respect the laws of the country in which we live, as they do not oblige us to deny the laws of God—make the following statement:—

The Bench of Catholic Bishops ratifies the

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Article 15.

1) Parliament can take valid decisions only if at least one half of its members are present. 642x 646

2) Parliament decides issues by a simple majority.

3) Changes in the constitution require the votes of two-thirds of the members of Parliament.

Article 16.

Acts passed by Parliament are signed by the President and Secretary of the Presidential Council of the People's Republic. New acts are promulgated by the President of the Presidential Council. Promulgation is effected by publication in the official gazette.

Article 17.

1) Parliament may at need appoint, out of its own members, a committee to investigate any matter.

2) It is the duty of all public authorities, offices and institutions as well as of all citizens to put at the disposal of such parliamentary committees all the data required by the committee and also to give evidence before the committee if required to do so.

Article 18.

1) Parliament may pronounce its dissolution before the expiration of its term.

2) In the event of war or other emergency Parliament can prolong its mandate for a stated length of time.

3) In the event of war or other emergency the Presidential Council of the People's Republic can re-convene a Parliament that has already been dissolved. A Parliament thus convened can itself decide the duration of its mandate.

4) In the event of dissolution a new Parliament must be elected within not more than three months from the day of dissolution.

5) A newly elected Parliament must be convened by the Presidential Council of the People's Republic within one month of polling day.

Article 19.

1) At its first sitting Parliament elects from among its own members the Presidential Council of the People's Republic, consisting of a President, two Vice-Presidents, a secretary and seventeen members. 642x 645

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642 645 2) The Chairman of the Council of Ministers, its Deputy Chairmen and its members are ineligible for election to the Presidential Council of the People's Republic.

Article 20.

1) The competence of the Presidential Council of the People's Republic extends to:

a) issuing the writ for a general election;

b) convening Parliament;

c) initiating legislation;

d) holding a plebiscite on matters of national importance;

e) concluding international treaties on behalf of the Hungarian People's Republic,

f) appointing diplomatic representatives and receiving the letters of credence of foreign diplomatic representatives;

g) ratifying international treaties;

h) appointing the higher civil servants and the higher officers of the armed forces, in accordance with the provisions of the law;

i) awarding the orders and titles instituted by Parliament and authorizing the acceptance of foreign orders and titles;

j) exercising the prerogative of mercy;

k) deciding issues specially submitted to its jurisdiction by an Act of Parliament.

2) The Presidential Council of the People's Republic may annul or modify any by-law, regulation or measure introduced by central or local organs of government, if they infringe the constitution or are detrimental to the interests of the working people.

3) The Presidential Council of the People's Republic may dissolve any local organ of government the activities of which infringe the constitution or are seriously detrimental to the interests of the working people.

4) When Parliament is not in session, its functions are exercised by the Presidential Council of the People's Republic; that body cannot, however, change the constitution.

5) The enactments of the Presidential Council of the People's Republic are legally binding decrees, which must, however, be submitted to Parliament at its next sitting.

6) All decisions and measures taken by the Presidential Council of the People's Republic are signed by the President and the Secretary of that body and must be published in the official gazette. 642× 645

Article 21.

1) The term of office of the Presidential Council of the People's Republic expires when Parliament elects a new Presidential Council of the People's Republic.

2) The Presidential Council of the People's Republic is responsible to Parliament and is under the obligation of rendering an account of its activities to Parliament.

3) Parliament has the right to recall the Presidential Council of the People's Republic or any member of it.

4) In order to make valid decisions, at least nine members of the Presidential Council of the People's Republic must be present, in addition to the President and Secretary.

5) The Presidential Council of the People's Republic draws up its own rules of procedure, which require the approval of Parliament.

SECTION FOUR

The Highest Organ of State Administration.

Article 22.

The highest organ of state administration is the Council of Ministers of the Hungarian People's Republic.

Article 23.

1) The Council of Ministers consists of

a) the Chairman of the Council of Ministers,

b) the Deputy Chairman or Chairmen of the Council of Ministers;

c) the Minister or Ministers of State;

d) the Ministers heading the various ministries.

2) The Council of Ministers or single members of it are elected to, or relieved of, office by Parliament on the recommendation of the Presidential Council of the People's Republic.

3) Members of the Council of Ministers who are not members of Parliament may attend the sittings of Parliament and take part in its debates.

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Article 24.

The Ministries of the Hungarian People's Republic are:

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
the Ministry of Home Affairs;
the Ministry of National Defence;
the Ministry of Finance;
the Ministry of Justice;
the Ministry of Heavy Industry;
the Ministry of Light Industry;
the Ministry of Agriculture;
the Ministry of Foreign Trade;
the Ministry of Home Trade;
the Ministry of Building;
the Ministry of Communications and Postal Services;
the Ministry of Adult Education;
the Ministry of Religion and Public Education;
the Ministry of Social Welfare.

Article 25.

1) The Council of Ministers:

a) directs the work of the ministries and of the other organs immediately subordinate to it;

b) ensures the enforcement of the laws and of the decrees issued by the Presidential Council of the People's Republic;

c) ensures the fulfilment of the economic plans;

d) deals with all the matters subject to its jurisdiction.

2) In the execution of its duties the Council of Ministers may issue decrees which must not, however, infringe the law or the decrees issued by the Presidential Council of the People's Republic.

3) Decrees issued by the Council of Ministers are signed by its Chairman. Such decrees must be published in the official gazette.

4) The Council of Ministers is empowered to annul or modify any regulation, decision or measure of any central or local organ of government if such regulations, decisions or measures infringe the constitution or are detrimental to the interests of the working people.

Article 26.

1) The Chairman of the Council of Ministers presides over the meetings of the Council, provides for the execution of the orders and decisions of the Council and

directs the work of the organs immediately subordinate to it. 642 x 645

2) The Ministers direct the branches of state administration entrusted to them and the work of the organs immediately subordinate to them, in accordance with the laws and the decrees and decisions of the Council of Ministers.

3) In the execution of their duties the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and the Ministers are empowered to issue decrees, which may not, however, infringe the laws of the People's Republic or the decrees made by the Presidential Council of the People's Republic or its Council of Ministers. Such decrees must be published in the official gazette.

Article 27.

1) The Council of Ministers is responsible for its activities to Parliament and must render regular accounts of its work to that body.

2) The Chairman of the Council of Ministers (or his Deputy) and its members are individually responsible for their actions and conduct. A special law regulates the implementation of this responsibility.

3) Any member of Parliament may put to the Council of Ministers, its Chairman or members, questions relating to any matter within the competence of the persons named and such questions must be answered by them in the House of Parliament.

Article 28.

1) The Council of Ministers may take measures on any matter touching state administration either directly or through one of its members.

2) The Council of Ministers is empowered to take under its own immediate control any branch of the state administration and can set up special organs for this purpose.

SECTION FIVE

The Local Organs of State Power.

Article 29.

1) For purposes of administration the territory of the Hungarian People's Republic is divided up into counties, districts, towns and boroughs. Larger towns 642 x 631

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With the liberation of Hungary came the task of restoring the equilibrium of constitutional life and of basic political institutions. Budapest was still under siege when a new provisional government in Debrecen set about reconstructing the country's political life. In December, 1944, elections for a Provisional National Assembly were held in the liberated territories with decidedly favorable results for the Smallholders and Social Democrats. The new National Assembly swiftly confirmed a Provisional Government which succeeded in keeping itself in political power for about a year, thus bridging the constitutional gap created by the utter political confusion of the first few "post-liberation" months.[4]

In 1945 a new electoral law prepared the way for a decisive national election. The new law assured the right of vote to every Hungarian citizen over the age of twenty, regardless of education, religion, sex or social standing. The first election after the liberation of the country was held under the new electoral law and generally conformed with the recent democratic orientation in offering not only a wide franchise but also a choice among six political parties ranging from Conservative to the ubiquitous Communists. The most significant constitutional step in the establishment of a democracy was undoubtedly the inauguration of a Hungarian Republic.[5] The new Law, No. I-1946, on "Hungary's Form of Government" gives an interesting and forceful background-picture of the new Republic. According to the preamble the power of the State rests with the Hungarian people who exercise their legislative authority through the democratically elected National Assembly. The basic document also states that "the republic guarantees to its citizens the natural and inalienable rights of men." On paper this law unde-

4 This provisional government represented all the parties which had taken part in the national resistance movement up to the time of the collapse of the country after a period of German occupation. A detailed party-breakdown of this provisional government headed by General Béla Miklós of the Hungarian Army, shows the following picture among the members of the Cabinet: 3 Social Democrats, 3 Communists, 2 Smallholders, 2 Conservatives, 2 Army Generals who were members of the first Armistice Commission to Moscow when the Horthy Government, in its last desperation, was negotiating for peace with the Red Army. It is interesting to note that of the two portfolios given the Smallholders Party, one was the all-important Ministry of Foreign Affairs while the portfolios of the Communists included the bases of economic reconstruction, trade, agriculture and communications.

5 A series of conferences and meetings held in January, 1946 among members of Hungary's leading political parties decided on the abolition of the Monarchy and on the establishment of a Hungarian Republic. These decisions were later endorsed by the new Hungarian National Assembly in its first parliamentary sessions. Cf. issues of the Hungarian daily, *Magyar Nemzet*, for January and February, 1946. Also John Haire, "Hungary Today," *New Statesman and Nation*, Nov. 10, 1945, pp. 314-315.

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687 fresh victims seems inexhaustible. The purge of the public services was
727 scarcely completed when the demand was raised for new large-scale dis-
661 missals."[10] Recent guilt-trials have increasingly reflected the eminently vindictive, purely partisan motivation of Hungary's new ruler, the Communist Party, whose leaders have never hesitated to bare their extreme ideological bias, turning it offensively and indiscriminately against the champions of alleged political or economic reaction.

Political Parties and Domestic Politics

645 The composition of the first post-war coalition government corre-
666 sponded roughly to the results of the country's post-liberation election.
665 The number of votes cast reached almost five million; of these the Smallholders Party polled well over two and a half million while the combined votes cast for the Communist and Social Democratic Parties barely exceeded one and a half million. Obviously, the elections of November 1945 inflicted an undisguised and significant defeat upon the two extreme leftist parties, particularly on the Communists, while temporarily assuring the middle-of-the-road Smallholders Party of a decisive governmental majority. The Smallholders' victory was most overwhelming in Budapest where the ratio of Communist votes was even lower than in the rest of the country. The new coalition government was built around nine members of the Smallholders Party and four members each of the Social Democratic and Communist Parties.

Several unexpected political developments were in startling contrast with this first chapter of democratic renaissance. The constitutional significance of national elections was considerably deflated by the pre-election agreement of the three major political parties to continue their coalition *regardless of the results of these popular elections.* This partisan maneuver gave the Communists an opportunity to exercise undue power, also displayed a strange "ballot-proof" version, a disappointingly autocratic appraisal of the role of national elections in parliamentary forms of government. According to its official interpretation, the agreement "was absolutely necessary to maintain national unity. There were such serious problems to be solved that none of the parties could attempt to undertake the task alone. For this reason . . . the major parties of the Hungarian Independence Front have agreed to maintain the

10 Cf. J. O., "Hungary Between East and West," *The World Today*, May, 1946, p. 214.

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coalition government after the elections. Their unity was also characterized by the fact that discussions about the formation of the coalition Government began on the day of the elections."[11] This somewhat prematurely formed government was under the titular leadership of Zoltàn Tildy of the majority Smallholders Party, but in reality the reins of power were tightly controlled by two new political leaders. Through a flexible "general staff" arrangement which permitted them to become Deputy Prime Ministers without portfolio, Arpàd Szakasits of the Social Democratic and Màtyás Rákosi of the Communist Party have wielded the decisive balance of power in the cabinet ever since the formally correct but politically meaningless national elections of November, 1945. The power relationships did not alter noticeably when Zoltàn Tildy was elected president of the new Republic and his post was taken by Ferenc Nagy, former President of the National Assembly and a colorless and conservative member of the same Smallholders Party.[12]

The weakness of native liberal peasant movements is another disturbing element in the post-war situation. Obviously, neither in Hungary nor in the surrounding Danubian countries is the majority of the peasantry adequately represented by the parties of either Left or Right; in fact, it has no more political representation today than it had under various pre-war regimes. Between the two World Wars only one liberal Hungarian peasant group, the Independent Small Farmers Party, had moments of political influence under the effective leadership of Gaszton Gál. Even this movement was doomed by the semi-feudal and aggressive rule of successive governments and the small land-holders who should have actually formed the political backbone of the country

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11 Cf. Istvan Szàva, *New Hungarian Domestic Policy* (Budapest, 1946), pp. 34-35. (Published in English). The author of this official account also gives a complete and significant summary of the principal objectives of Hungary's first "popularly elected" post-war government. These involved the following problems: to guarantee the food supplies, to break down the prices and inflation, to nationalize the mines and key-industries, to guarantee order and public security, and *to overcome the reaction*. In the light of the secret conspiracy and the seemingly wholesale liquidation of all "reaction," this early war-objective of the Government is certainly noteworthy.

12 According to official Hungarian interpretation, "The change in the person of the Premier did not affect the composition of the government; there were also minor changes in the cabinet without affecting the principles upon which the coalition was based." I. Szàva, *New Hungarian Domestic Policy*, p. 35. Despite several sharp political reversals, Ferenc Nagy is still Prime Minister in the present coalition government.

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pelled to fight, they will defend themselves fully and will participate in the struggle, hoping to promote the cause of peace."[14]

The Social Democratic Party originally assumed the role of bridging the gap between Left and Right, thus helping to stabilize and unify the divergent elements of political leadership. Nothing could be more vital for the future of Hungary, particularly in domestic politics, than the maintenance of a strong center, progressive but not violent, popular without being extremist. The Socialist members of the coalition cabinet have in the beginning ably performed the role of economic and political mediation. They held the portfolios of Justice, Industry and Commerce, in an attempt to balance well-entrenched Communist power, manifested in the key-posts of the Ministries of the Interior, Popular Welfare and Communications.[15]

Recently, however, a significant shift of political positions occurred upsetting the precarious equilibrium of domestic politics. The Thirty-Fifth Official Congress of the Social Democratic Party, meeting in Budapest in February 1947, ended with a widely publicized and spectacular victory of its extreme left-wing leaders over the more conservative right-wing members who seemed to have been completely discredited. This bitter discord within the party was the climax of a long process of disagreement with an ever widening area of political misunderstanding and intolerance. The final outcome of the Social Democratic Congress was the dramatic decision of the present Party leadership to liquidate its moderate members and to integrate its activities with those of the Communist Party. For all practical purposes the Social Democratic Party thus ceased to exist independently and has entered the uncertain path of cooperation with the Communists.[16]

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14 Cf. *Hungarian Information Service*, published by the Hungarian Legation, Washington, D. C., issue of Mar. 4, 1947, pp. 3-4. These desperate and embittered words were uttered in the course of the liquidation of the recent "reactionary" conspiracy. The conspiracy-scare finally led to a purge of the Smallholders Party and to a full-fledged domestic political crises.

15 The Smallholders have managed to retain several important portfolios, such as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, War and Propaganda.

16 Cf. *Népszava*, official daily paper of the Social Democratic Party, especially in issues of Feb. 1-8, 1947, front-page accounts of the exact progress of the Party Congress. Cf. *The Manchester Guardian*, (Feb. 7, 1947, p. 4.) in a cautious but informative editorial which clearly raises the fundamental issue, "The question that remains is how far the Social Democratic Party, as at present led and constituted, can continue to exist independently . . . and yet in cooperation with the Communists." The more recent behavior of certain Social Democratic leaders has dispelled all doubt concerning the outcome of this political dilemma.

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Hungarian government finally released him, and in 1940 exchanged him for several Hungarian agents held in the prisons of Soviet Russia.[18] Rákosi again returned to Hungary in January 1945, as official leader and Secretary General of the Hungarian Communist Party. Since November 1945 he has been a member of the Government as one of the three Vice Prime Ministers.

For the past two years Rákosi has been the guiding power and top policy maker of the Communist Party. Until the recent conspiracy and crisis in domestic politics, his attitude appeared to be one of conciliation and of professed belief in the coalition government. If statements of Communist leaders can be taken at their face value, Rákosi's group was apparently not intent on establishing a sweeping or exclusive political control of the country's domestic life—at least not during an initial period of post-war reconstruction fraught with its own particular brand of difficulties. Even as late as June 1946, Rákosi emphatically declared that his Party did not aim at dictatorship but at "effective collaboration in a concentration of national forces."[19] This statement implied the tactical decision of a continuing participation in a three-party coalition. The Communists thus refrained for a while from an open split of political life into a crippling tug-of-war between government and opposition; the primary objectives of Hungary's reconstruction (land reform, currency stabilization, gradual nationalization) were for the greater part achieved in this period of inter-party truce conceived in an atmosphere of ideological moderation.

By the winter of 1946 the blueprint of Communist party tactics revealed a drastic change in political attitudes. A second phase of *Gleichschaltung* activities was launched coincident with the slow withdrawal of the Red Army occupational troops, the signing of satellite peace treaties and with a slight increase in political interest and economic pressure from the West. The ultimate purpose of this phase was clear to all

18 This item of political information is not generally known, for Rákosi's exchange was the result of secret negotiations between the two governments. Official biographies touch rather lightly on this transitional period in Rákosi's life. Cf. a recent press-release of the Hungarian Information Service, published by the Hungarian Legation in Washington, D. C., which simply states that "In 1940, due to the Soviet Union's intervention, Rákosi was freed. Then he emigrated to the Soviet Union." *Hungarian Press Release*, No. 7, June 10, 1946.

19 Cf. *Magyar Nemzet*, issues of June, 1946. These comments were widely quoted and discussed in the Hungarian press, which faithfully records every Communist utterance, regardless of its political significance.

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role throughout the liquidation of the conspiracy. The Army leader most seriously implicated was Major General Lajos Dálnoki-Veress, who apparently served as head of *Magyar Közösség*, central organ of the reactionary plot. When the conspiracy was unmasked, the Ministry of the Interior used General Veress' "full confession" to complete the list of suspects; within a few days it arrested well over one hundred "fascist criminals," including six deputies of the Smallholders Party.[22]

As the Communists and Socialists continued to tighten control over the government, the weeding out of anti-democratic factions involved primarily three important Cabinet Ministries; Foreign Affairs, Agriculture and Reconstruction. Again the most prominent victims proved to be members of the Smallholders Party. The Ministry of Interior suddenly insisted that one of the anti-Communist members of Parliament, Béla Kovács, secretary of the Smallholders Party, be arrested. In Kovács' case all previous formalities were neglected; he was summarily jailed by Soviet occupational authorities on a set of charges including espionage against the Soviet Army, terrorism against the Russian occupation forces and participation in the formation of armed anti-Soviet groups.

Shortly after these arrests, Vice-Premier Rákosi demanded a national election, a new popular mandate to the two workers' parties by which Hungary's achievements could effectively be insured and decisive steps be taken in the fight of progressivism against feudalism. The Social Democratic Party fully supported Communist demands throughout these revolutionary developments. Giving a new and more flexible definition of democracy in Hungary, Arpád Szakasits explained at a Communist-Socialist rally that the Government could no longer be based on "mere arithmetical illusions." He argued that the "unnatural" electoral victory of the Smallholders could not form the basis of political rights. "We have always demanded a thorough purge of the Smallholders Party, and told its leaders *to abandon arithmetical illusions. We urged them to allow only peasants and other honest people to speak in their councils.*"[23]

22 Cf. "Die Verhaftungen in Budapest, Ein Communique des Innenministeriums," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Jan. 6, 1947, front page; Albion Ross, "Hungary Reports Plot to Restore Horthy to Power," *The New York Times*, Jan. 5, 1947, pp. 1 and 35. László Rajk, Communist Minister of the Interior, controls the entire police system; he is not a Moscow emigré, but an extremist fanatic for whom even the Moscow-trained group of Communists is too slow. His brother was a Nazi stormtrooper, he himself is a fairly young ex-schoolteacher. Rajk was instrumental in carrying out the full-fledged purge of the Hungarian Army.

23 Cf. *Magyar Nemzet*, Jan. 19, 1947, p. 1. (Italics mine.)

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editor, Béla Zsolt. From all indications, Zsolt's articles carry a great deal of weight in influencing the public opinion of Budapest. The Smallholders' weekly publication, *Reggel*, manages to supply a detailed and interesting coverage of domestic developments, both economic and political. Such measures of internal reconstruction as the application of a nation-wide martial law and death penalties to black marketeers and smugglers are conscientiously discussed and appraised in *Reggel*.[31]

Few foreign language publications have penetrated the intellectual "iron curtain" around Hungary; Western political and literary materials cannot be disseminated. Soviet authorities officially protested in the fall of 1946 against the publication and distribution of the U. S. State Department Bulletin containing primarily official documents. The American Legation in Budapest, backed up by the State Department, has nevertheless continued to distribute the Bulletin on a mailing list basis. About 500 English language and 500 Hungarian copies are regularly sent to newspapers, and to a few carefully selected government officials.

Propaganda matters are handled by the Ministry of Public Information whose official objectives involve the "information and *influencing* of Hungarian public opinion." Democracy has to be accepted, states an official bulletin of Public Information, even by those who were misled by the destructive propaganda of the past few years and have thus far proved incapable of adapting themselves to Hungary's present-day democracy.[32] These broad and aggressive objectives were gradually implemented by such officials as the present Minister of Information, József Bognár, theoretically a Smallholder, in reality of the extreme Left. According to recent newspaper reports, his Ministry has organized hundreds of political and cultural indoctrination courses, given both in Budapest and in provincial communities under the personal supervision of Bognár. The courses deal with "timely political and social questions, including such problems as participation of the peasant class in a democracy and the successful methods of national planning."[33] Propaganda and press are closely interwoven in present

31 This drastic executive order was put into effect in December, 1946. Judges are in permanent sessions to deal with such cases without delay. In addition to Budapest tribunals, twenty-two provincial courts are handling "crimes" connected with black-market operations. Penalties range for a minimum of ten years' imprisonment to death sentences. Cf. *Reggel*, Dec. 2, 1946, p. 5.

32 Quoted in *Világ*, Nov. 23, 1946, p. 2.

33 Cf. *Magyar Nemzet*, Nov. 22, 1946, p. 3. The report indicates that there are over one hundred students in each course, the period of instruction covering about two weeks.

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a rearguard action against both the Russian occupation authorities and the Communist party in order to save their country from total dictatorship. The Communists, however, were step-by-step building up bases of action, finding sources of support, and infiltrating key positions in the country.

In Hungary the major party was the Small Holders party. From November 1945, when the Miklos provisional government came to an end, to December 1948, when a clearly Communist government took over, there were a series of governments headed by members of the Small Holders party. The prime ministers were, in sequence, Zolt'an Tildy, Ferenc Nagy, and Lajos Dinnyés. At the same time there was a series of Ministers of National Defense, who were also, until September 9, 1948, members of other parties than the Communist. Some of these were high-ranking generals, some were not. As our previous case studies reveal, the Minister of National Defense in the Communist satellite countries (and in those countries also before the Communists took over) was normally a general. There was not the sharp distinction between civil and military authority which is common in some Western countries. It is as unusual in East Europe for the Minister of National Defense not to be the top-ranking general as it is unusual here for him to be so.

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In Hungary, however, that was not the situation. Until September 1948 the Ministers of National Defense, though officers, were chosen in terms of civilian politics as much as for military considerations. The list of Ministers of Defense includes, in sequence: Janos Vörös, Jenö Tombor, Albert Bartha, Lajos Dinnyés, Peter Veres, Mihaly Farkas, and Istvan Bata. Until Veres they were all Small Holders party members. Veres was a member of the National Peasant party and a more pliable tool of the Communists. Farkas was a Communist leader and Bata a Soviet officer. Of these Ministers we have already met Colonel General Janos Vörös, one of the three leading officers in the Miklos group which went over to the Russians at the end of the war. Albert Bartha was also a leading officer who just before his appointment had been one of the three commissioners responsible for selecting officers for discharge as the Hungarian Army was cut to treaty size. On this commission he represented the non-Communist point of view but was consistently outvoted two-to-one in trying to retain career officers and keep out Communists. Bartha had been a Social Democrat in 1918 and rejoined them in 1945. Ferenc Nagy gives an interesting picture of the procedure by which Bartha was chosen Minister. He writes in his memoirs:

> "I still had to appoint a new man as Minister of Education and another in the place of Eugene Tombor, Minister of Defense, who had died . . . My nominee for the defense post was John Erőss, until now

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reparations commissioner . . . I took my list to Sviridov [the Soviet Commander in occupied Hungary]. Sviridov's attitude was as I had supposed. First he protested sharply against my wish to appoint a civilian Minister of War . . . I began to argue with him, pointing out that we had no high-ranking soldier capable of reorganizing the army well. For this reason a man distinguished in public affairs should head it.

"Sviridov began to name a list of generals. I knew well that he wanted me to appoint General Palffy-Oesterreicher, but he did not dare to mention his name to me. Finally, he proposed Albert Bartha, retired general and a Smallholder Member of Parliament." 32

Bartha lasted from August 20, 1946, to March 14, 1947, when he was replaced by a more pliant leader of the Smallholders party, Lajos Dinnyés. Dinnyés, as we have noted, was soon promoted to Prime Minister, and his place was taken by Veres, the last non-Communist Minister of Defense.

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All this while the Minister of Defense, like the Prime Minister himself, was becoming more and more of a figurehead. Communist officers within his department were acting on their own, taking orders from their party leaders and from Russian occupation officials instead of from their official superiors. A typical episode is related by Nagy:

"Just before Christmas prime ministry officials received confidential reports that the army's political squad had arrested eight or ten men . . . This political squad, originally established by the Debrecen government to investigate officers who had fled or been forced by the Nazis to retreat to the West, now was headed by the very dangerous Communist, General Palffy-Oesterreicher . . .

"Startled by the report, I called the War Minister to account: 'Are you aware that the political squad in your ministry arrested a number of prominent men?'

" 'General Palffy-Oesterreicher is the head of the division. He has reported nothing,' he answered, 'I too learned of the arrests by accident and was just about to order a report.'

" 'Please let me have the details immediately,' I instructed.